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FRIENDLY REMARKS

UPON SOME PARTICULARS

OF HIS ADMINISTRATION.

IN A

LETTER TO MR. PITT. (By the Author)

BY

A NEAR OBSERVER.

THE SECOND EDITION.

From the Author

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FRIENDLY REMARKS

WITH SOME PARAPHRASES

ON HIS ADMINISTRATION

IN A

LETTER TO MR. HITT

BY

JOHN G. ORR

From the Author

LONDON

AND AT THE

NEW YORK

1850

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TO
MR. PITT, &c.

SIR,

AMIDST the malicious attacks of your enemies, and the flattering insinuations of your adherents, it may be of some use to you to hear the voice of a true friend. The writer of the following pages has this claim to that character:—with a sufficient knowledge of your person to contract some degree of attachment, and without indiscriminate partiality, his friendship is in exact proportion to his belief of your private worth and public virtue. Admiration for the splendid talents which God has bestowed upon you, is common to him with every man of this nation, and perhaps of Europe, whether your enemies or your friends: but even that admiration he can control, accordingly as he believes the exercise of those talents to be directed by prudent means to beneficial purposes. Independent both in his disposition and his circumstances, he has never sought that intimacy, which tends to fascinate by a near approach to great characters in great situations; at the same time

that his view of your conduct has for some years been taken from a position, where he has had a distinct perception of your principles and of your actions.

This condition does not entitle him to offer with any hope of effect, either advice or admonition, by private communication, or he would perhaps prefer that method. The press is open to him. That instrument, which by your own neglect, is principally employed to your detriment, he wishes, as by a fair retribution, in the present instance, to render serviceable at once to you and to your country. The worst that can befall these pages is, that they should not draw the attention either of yourself or others :—the writer will take care, that while he may fail to do good, he will abstain from doing harm ; and pursuing this course, he trusts to the guidance of a heart, which he has endeavoured to divest of every feeling, but a desire to be useful to his country and to mankind.

With this scope, he purposes to take a view of some important particulars of your administration ; and it is his sincere wish, and his ardent prayer, that what he offers may come pure from the source of genuine rectitude ; and that if any effect is to be derived from it, it may be owing to sound

principles and to moderate arguments, rather than to specious reasonings and to elegant declamations. The inspiration he would invoke should be that of wisdom from above, not of cunning and crooked policy from below ; to influence the minds of men by the noblest and best affections implanted in them by their Creator, rather than by the short-sighted, momentary, and insecure impulse of their selfish passions, and what is often mistakenly called their interest.

The intention of the following observations, is to show, by a review of our foreign and domestic concerns, not only that the strictest honesty has been, and ever will be to you, the most successful policy : but also more particularly to evince the necessity of clear, open, and full explanations of the nature, use, extent, and principle of your measures. Because by these, you may disarm opposition of the advantages they often have obtained, and may again procure, against you, if they are suffered to work on our vulgar prejudices, to misrepresent facts without contradiction, and to circulate arguments without refutation.

FOREIGN CONCERNS.

To begin with the foreign concerns. Our insular situation, while it is in every respect the greatest blessing, is in many points of view the cause of our relative strength and importance in the scale of powers in Europe : from the happy influence of this peculiar circumstance, our favoured island has carried the refinements and comforts of advanced civilization to a higher degree, and with less corresponding inconvenience, than any other nation in any other period of recorded history. We have combined ease with exertion, martial courage with polished humanity, simplicity and frankness with prudence and reserve, riches with virtue, the pursuit of gain with the practice of honesty and generosity, the spirit of trade with the dictates of honour, free and unrestrained social intercourse with much purity of morals, the indulgences of luxury with little of its enervating influence. Our merchants have been princes ; our princes have been men ; our nobility have bled in the cause of their country by sea and land ; our gentry have been steady assertors of liberty and good order ; our middle ranks have been

frugal, industrious, rich, and comfortable; our people have been loyal, brave, humane, and happy. Arts, trade, manufactures, learning, and liberty have crowned our fortunate condition. The union of these so seldom united blessings has been produced principally by our insular situation. The sea encircling our coasts, has had something of the same effect as on our natural bodies, to invigorate our habit, quicken our circulation, open our pores for the exportation of redundancy, and the importation of deficiencies, and to call forth into activity and production all our noblest and most useful energies.

It is no wonder, that with such domestic objects, and with such a barrier between us and foreign countries, the business of external politics should have been little studied. Few among us know who are the ministers, what are the parties, the views, the interests, the prejudices, the customs, manners, and police of foreign countries. We consider England as in general exempt from any interference in their intrigues; and unless the balance of Europe, and the independence of nations, are imminently threatened, we are for the most part averse to implicate ourselves with details, which we consider as less our province, than that of continental states, and in which, of course, we

feel ourselves to have in general less skill and ability. We are content to supply the wants of our neighbours; and the advantage or detriment to trade, is the most interesting aspect in which we view their concerns.

Such are the feelings of Englishmen. The greatest part of the nation are convinced by experience, that we are generally duped by foreign negotiators (except in regard to commercial treaties), and that while we bring less cunning into our diplomatic discussions, we are made to fight the battles of other nations, and to drain our precious resources for interests at least remote, and contingencies at least precarious.

The influence of these considerations will be traced in the very sparing confidence, as to foreign concerns, which most persons are inclined to place in administration. The Russian negotiation in the year 1791, and perhaps other instances, might be brought as examples.

What are the consequences which I mean to deduce from these principles? Not only that a peculiar mode of negotiation, adapted to the foregoing circumstances, and suitable to the spirit of the country, must be followed, and indeed is the only sure method to render your transactions consistent

and beneficial ; but that you cannot too carefully explain the purpose of your measures, to secure that cordial and effective support which can alone give vigour to your interference. Satisfied of the soundness and policy of your principle of action, we shall cheerfully, and without jealous curiosity, leave the management of the details to the hands in which they are vested by the constitution. But doubtful of the principle, or believing it to be erroneous, and contrary to the interests growing out of our insular situation, we are led to check your efforts, and to counteract your exertions. Parliament by degrees will faithfully reflect the opinions, and, to a great degree, the prejudices of the nation at large. These opinions, indeed, and prejudices come sifted through that medium ; they are not so gross, but they are in substance still the same ; they undergo some modifications by the way ; but they pass at length, and are effectual to obstruct your negotiation, perhaps, in its very crisis.

Your negotiations must, therefore, proceed upon principles, not adverse to the course of these opinions and prejudices. It is in vain to butt them in front : you may in some degree guide their force and avail yourself of their impulse, but you cannot overcome their opposite resistance.

But this is not enough. Your views must appear, must be explained, must be felt to proceed upon maxims consistent with these sentiments. If in your transactions with foreign powers you interfere, or are even mistakenly thought to interfere, beyond the interests of this country, as founded on its insular situation, the support of Parliament to such measures will at first be cold ; jealousy will spread abroad ; you will be suspected of ambition to raise your character with foreign nations, by a display of your power ; you will be accused of hazarding the peace of your country, to make a show of its influence. By degrees, this anxiety will spread itself from mind to mind, from private thoughts to conversations, from conversations to publications, from publications to debate, from debate to discontent. Your foreign adversaries grow aware of the increasing reluctance ; they stop short in the moment of acquiescence ; they seek to foment our domestic disunion ; they tamper perhaps with those who may assist to inflame it by their popular writings, or their eloquent declamations. At length the full and fatal effect takes place, your power is sapped, you are obliged to give way to the triumphant adversary ; and it is fortunate if you can do it without circumstances of

humiliation, proportionate to the factious accusation of unnecessary interposition. The natural result is a loss of confidence, and consequently of influence with foreign nations, and the seed of future jealousy at home in subsequent negotiations.

Is, or is not this a fair picture of your situation in the business of the Russian armament?

But perhaps you will answer—The negotiation with Russia was founded on the true interest of the nation: those who obstructed it were its enemies. Upon their heads be all these evil consequences; upon those who misled the nation and Parliament to their own disadvantage, to the irreparable loss of Europe, and perhaps to the production of most of those evils that have since disturbed its peace: I was not to blame; I acted sincerely and honestly for my country; it is for those who unjustly withdrew their confidence, to charge themselves with the misfortunes they alone occasioned.

To this I reply—Had you then forgotten that we have prejudices, arising, if you please, out of our ignorance of foreign affairs, out of our insular situation? had you forgotten that you have opponents to heighten those prejudices at home, by specious

and popular arguments? Could you not suppose it possible, that the intelligence of these struggles might chance, in some shape or other, to take a journey all the way to Petersburg, for the patriotic purpose of stiffening the resistance of the Empress of all the Russias? It was unfortunate if the possibility of all these accidents did not strike you, in time to induce you to call for the confidence of Parliament, and of the public, by a full and clear explanation of the principles of the interposition, and its necessity, as well for immediate as remote consequences to the welfare of Great Britain and Europe. It would surely have repaid you the trouble, to have enlightened our ignorance, and to have dissipated our objections by such an explanation: and by an industry to circulate that explanation proportioned to the indefatigable activity of your anti-negotiators. Such industry you did not exert, and such an explanation you omitted to make. Satisfied of the justice of your motives, you claimed, in rather a high and reserved tone, the confidence of the House of Commons, and of their constituents, upon the principles of the Constitution, which has vested the functions of negotiation in the executive power; and perhaps you might think, that

confidence would not be refused you after the long period, during which you had managed our domestic affairs to our unequivocal advantage, and almost with our universal approbation. It was, however, to be recollected, that the Constitution, while it places the conduct of treaties in the hands of the Crown, yet leaves the whole power of rendering them effectual, in case of a rupture, in the hands of Parliament ;—that Parliament which we have before proved to be, sooner or later, governed by the sense of the majority of the nation, and in some degree by its prejudices. But let us pass from this instance of ill success or mismanagement ; the first which occurred in your administration of our foreign concerns, and which it cannot be very pleasing to you to dwell upon, any more than to myself, who coincided individually with you in sentiment, that our interference on that occasion was founded on interests, although remote in local situation, yet, in a great degree, essential to our welfare.

It appears to me that I have proved in what manner our insular situation renders us in general ignorant, and, to a great degree, careless of foreign transactions ; and that therefore all your negotiations must, in their principle, have a view to these dispo-

sitions, or, if you please to call them, prejudices; since the power of effectual negotiation requires the cordial support of your fellow-countrymen: and above all, that it is not only wise, but necessary, to carry our minds along with you by clear and full explanations of the principle of each measure, circulated by every means, and in every quarter.

Of late, however, this description of our ignorance and inattention to foreign affairs has less application than formerly. Our insular situation has availed but little to seclude us from the involuntary attention excited by an extraordinary phænomenon in a neighbouring country.

It is remarked by Montesquieu, that the inhabitants of islands have this advantage, that they are separated from great empires; that conquerors are arrested by the sea, and that the islanders are not enveloped by their conquests; and that they more easily preserve their laws. This observation is not only true, but obvious: to be exempt from the invasions of ambitious tyranny, is certainly an invaluable privilege; and it is one of those blessings which ought to raise the gratitude of the British nation to the great Author of the world. The sea throws its protecting arms around us, and a great gulf intervenes, as a salutary obstacle to

our enemies. But though armies may be repelled in their progress by its intervention, it is not the same of principles and opinions.

The French revolution has broached doctrines of so novel and striking a tendency, as to excite curiosity even in those sober and instructed minds who could at first refrain from admiration; and to draw both the admiration and the approbation of others, who were less able to combine the full effect and tendency of their operation: and whose delusion could only admit of a cure by the sanguinary and oppressive despotism that resulted from them. Our attention has indeed been roused; we have been no longer indifferent to the affairs of the Continent; and we have all looked to that scene of interesting transactions with different sensations, according as we were influenced by our understandings, or our tempers, our educations, our situations, or our views of life. But while our natural inadvertence to foreign subjects has been, for the present, done away by so extraordinary an occurrence, the operation of the principles I have before laid down, though weakened, has not been destroyed; and the ground and extent of our interference with French affairs must still, in a great measure, be determined and regu-

lated by the opinions and prejudices arising from our insular habits. The war in which we are engaged was evidently forced upon you by imperious necessity ; not less by the voice of the nation, than by the attacks of our foreign enemy, assisted by faction, sedition, and treason, at home. The majority of Englishmen were clearly for a resistance to these machinations ; but the operations by which this resistance was to be carried into execution, they were inclined to measure by the principles of a defensive system ; and it has been nearly an universal sentiment, that the right of interference with the government of France, was derived from the necessity of self-defence, and ought to be limited to those measures which self-defence should render necessary.

In the course of the speculations which have arisen from the discussion of these topics, the minds of men were excited to controversy. Some persons of active and exquisite sensibility arose with eager eloquence ; such as irritable imaginations, quick feelings, and strong perceptions, are apt to generate. The graces of elocution and of learning, which men of such qualities are the most likely to acquire, serve often but to stimulate the impetuosity of genius. In short, the force of their

own thoughts outran the sympathy of others. Antagonists rose up against them, and as contest produces heat, and heat exaggeration, the evils of the innovations which alarmed them, would naturally produce a comparison with the abuses they were intended to remedy. The oppressions of the ancient government of France were represented as existing in principle rather than in practice; while the tyranny of the modern anarchy was described as excessive in its effect, and as being the more intolerable from the pretence of absolute freedom, and universal philanthropy.

These assertions, as might well be expected, were artfully represented by the opponents, as a direct panegyric on the ancient government of France. The glowing expressions of enthusiastic eloquence were held forth as the wild ravings of Quixotism; and the arguments intended to refute the innovations of disorganizing Jacobins, were converted into rank Tory principles; the divine right of kings was pointed out as rearing its head, and a crusade was declared to be determined, by the synod of despots, for its propagation, in which our gracious Sovereign was to be included. Much ingenuity was displayed by each side of the question, no little invective, and some abuse. In

proportion as the affray of dispute grew warm both parties struck at random, and pushing their opinions too far, they lost sight of that medium which is the seat of truth.

What was the consequence? That those who maintained the right side of the question lost as much weight with the public, as they did of their own temper; and whatsoever was ascribed to any argument or principle beyond its just value, diminished by degrees, precisely in the same proportion, the confidence of the sober part of the nation. Those who equally detest despotism and anarchy, those who best love, and consequently best support the English Constitution, which provides for the prevention of the one and the other, grew uneasy, to see the just estimation of things lie in the middle, between both parties, and feared lest their interests might be rashly administered, while imaginations were heated, and disputations envenomed by mutual provocation.

To you, Sir, as to the calmest and clearest reasoner, they looked for satisfaction; they were persuaded that you were the friend of peace, because peace had been your friend; you had, they knew, much to lose, and nothing to gain by the continuation of the war. They were sensible that your power was more certain in the tranquillity of

pacification, than in the turbulence of warfare. They looked to your condition in the last peace: they recollected that you had then no discontents, no difficulties, no murmurs to encounter. To take off taxes, not to impose them; to diminish the national debt, not to increase it; to provide salutary regulations for the extension of commerce abroad, and of comfort at home; such had been then your employments; grateful to the nation, and not less so to yourself. With such a contrast, we could not doubt of your inclination to peace.

With this conviction of the soundness of your judgment, and the reasonableness of your motives, we looked to you for a mitigation of what was extravagant in the opinions of some who supported you. A fair and manly definition of the limit of our interference was expected at your hands. Whether you were persuaded by some of your new adherents, and unwilling to weaken their zeal in your support, by seeming to oppose their schemes; whether you expected they would be obstinate in proportion as they were mistaken, and offended by the disavowal of their plans in the same degree in which they were impracticable; or, what is much more probable, that you principally considered the effect of your measures

abroad, by intimidation of the French, and by securing the more earnest attachment of the emigrant troops, while they hoped to restore the old government—Whether by these, or other objects, your attention was diverted from a much more important quarter, the minds of your ancient and steady supporters at home, whose cordial co-operation would have given you ten times more strength than your newly converted allies, or your emigrant soldiers—it is too certain you neglected to make the necessary explanation : an air of mystery, and of deeper politics than the plain dictates of good sense and of justice, seemed to be thrown over your speeches. Instead of unreserved and explicit declarations, the only method to counteract spreading jealousy, ambiguity seemed lurking in the expressions, and a desire not to be committed, rather than a wish to be understood. The belief of the imputed Quixotism, and of the crusade of opinions, gained ground, and while many long attached and faithful friends were disturbed and wavering, others continued to support you, from a fear of the confusion that would follow your dismissal from office ; and some thought no way so sure to bring your tone to its right level, as by open opposition in Parliament.

I need not say that these classes, and even the last, included some persons, whose known attachment to you, whose independence and purity, from even a suspicion of corruption, gave a weight to their actions a thousand times greater than you could, for any length of time, hope to derive from those whose overstrained notions you were thought to protect.

At length you found it prudent to explain, and although the amount of that explanation did not go so far as many of your truest friends desired, yet they were prompt to be satisfied, where they wished not to be discontented ; and much strength was recovered by this approach to the right line of reason, justice, and openness of principle.

Of late, however, you have been induced to give full satisfaction on this head, and the accession of power to you has been in proportion. Not all the struggles of ambitious discontent, joined to the machinations of foreign enemies, in the late discussions upon constitutional topics, in the passing of the bills to prevent sedition, have been able to shake you, while reason, moderation, and justice, appear to be the measure of your opinions upon the present contest with France ; and while your thoughts on that subject, are in unison with

those of every honest man, and every true lover of order and genuine liberty throughout the kingdom.

What have I endeavoured to prove? that although the French Revolution has drawn the minds of all Englishmen, in an unusual degree, to the consideration of foreign affairs, yet much of our insular opinions and prejudices remain:—That we give confidence to Government only upon conviction, and in a proportion limited by our estimate of the wisdom and necessity of the measure: and that your power, and the weight of your interference has risen and fallen, according to the greater or less degree of clearness and candour with which you have manifested your principle of action.

But to what does this reprehension of your errors lead me? a reprehension, which, if I am sincere in my professions of friendship, I must lament to think necessary to the elucidation of the principles I mean to establish. It leads me to a conclusion, that a system of negotiation adapted to our insular habits and prejudices should be considered, ascertained, promulgated, and invariably followed, to ensure the true weight and consequence to the interference of this great, rich, powerful, and commercial nation. Some system,

which even ignorant men may understand, learned men approve, cunning men dread, good men support, and wise men use. What is then this wonderful system which unites such transcendent advantages? Honesty—public honesty; strict justice; immutable candour; stable consistency, and intrepid determination. Not to interfere but where the principle of the motive is so clear as to ensure the support of your friends, and the respect even of your adversary: to push that interference no farther than such a principle will maintain: to argue only upon the grounds which really justify: to explain without reserve, and in the face of all mankind, the dangers to be prevented, and the interests to be preserved: to have no objects which you cannot explain: to suffer no contest to lead you into exaggeration, no misrepresentation to tempt you to retaliation: to repel no injury by injustice: to be firm, but dispassionate, just when you are provoked, candid when you are misrepresented, and intrepid when you are attacked.

Good God! Sir, what power would attend such conduct, explained by your admirable eloquence! confidence little short of devotion, strength invincible, and acquiescence unfeigned. Enthusiasm

would then be enlisted on the right side. Little can be added, indeed, to the exertion of our soldiers or sailors, so nobly prodigal of their lives in the cause of their country; but upon this plan, they would never want a Grotius, a Puffendorf, or a Vattel, to justify upon general principles their patriotism; their last drop of blood would be spent without a reserve, and their last breath be expired without hesitation, or doubt of the justice and sanctity of their warfare. The opinions and prejudices arising from our insular situation would only coincide and enforce the operations of such a system, and the pride and exclusion, which increase national partiality, would strengthen your hands, while they would be, in some degree, justified by the increasing reputation and influence of the nation.

The first objection I expect to hear to this scheme is, that it is visionary, impracticable, and Utopian. Where, will it be said, is the man to execute such a plan? Is it with mankind in these degenerate days that it can be practised?—where is the man! Thou art the man: God has made thee with talents fit to govern thy fellow-creatures, and to lead them to what is right. Transcendent eloquence, clear and convincing argumentation,

manly determination, and a noble disinterestedness, private worth, and public virtue; these are the qualities long, and I hope deservedly, attributed to you. To what end were they given? who bestowed them? What a responsibility attends them! what good may they effect by their exertion! what pity to lose the least part of the benefit they may confer on your country, on your contemporaries of every nation, and on posterity! Few men have ever had an equal power to do good with yourself. A wonderful understanding, matured by the fostering care of your immortal father, at a period when other men begin to think; a robust constitution; traditional experience; hereditary fame; the favour, I may say the love, of a great nation; the confidence of a good king; your own virtues; the very vices of your adversaries, and their imprudence, have combined to place you on the pinnacle of just and constitutional power. Exert the utmost of that power in this duty of the most extended influence. The example is sadly wanted. Frederick (the great, as he is called) has been a successful violator of public faith: he has left not only his actions, but his precepts, to tempt all shallow politicians to imitate his pernicious system. All things go by fashion; treachery,

and deceit as well as the rest. Turn the tide of this fashion from its unnatural course, and you will sail triumphant on the stream of universal admiration, with the unceasing acclamations of the present and of future times. Let not the false and destructive opinion prevail, that public men are public cheats, that politics are intrigue, and that negotiation is a mutual attempt to over-reach and confound. Assert the truth, show the pre-eminence of virtue over vice: prove that in this nether world, as in the great universe, power, wisdom, and goodness are the inherent attributes of rightly constituted government.

But what person ever practised these fanciful maxims? Would to God examples were many. But here is one at least. Gustavus Adolphus, a hero of no fabulous history; the leader of a less powerful nation than our own, who gained more victories by the confidence of mankind than by the art of war, or the valour of his troops; who reigned in the hearts of his subjects, in the imaginations of his allies, and in the apprehensions of his enemies; who conquered even in death; the reverence and renown of whose name made him, by a sort of posthumous empire, the arbiter of foreign nations when he was no more, and enabled

him to hand down to a woman, and a minor, an undisputed sway both abroad and at home. But must you have English examples? I will not talk to you of Alfred, the pride and glory of our history. —Have we not a living example?—lives there not a man, who carried truth, fidelity, national honour, and justice into climates long thought fatal to their existence?—the conqueror of Tippoo Saib, the pacificator and humanizer of Eastern tyrants appeared, and the fiends of dissimulation, treachery, ingratitude, and assassination, the usual negotiators of those regions, shrunk and vanished before him. Was it not an acknowledged axiom, that good faith, if practicable in Europe, was totally inapplicable to Asia: yet in what instance did he deceive? or in what respect did he fail? what enemy subdued him? what friend forsook him? what ally wavered? what subject hesitated? In all he was successful, to the glory of his country, to the advantage of his employers, and to the admiration and edification of mankind. Future ages, as well as the present, will have an interest in such conduct, which tends to stem the torrent of public depravity, to reconcile all men to order and government, and to prove that there is a sway in noble minds, which outdoes all the machinations

of Machiavelian intrigue. And was this done by a Governor-general of Bengal, and can it not be done by a Minister of Great Britain? Was it your fellow-subject who made this grand experiment, and need you despair? A plain man, no votary to the Muses; a soldier, whose eloquence was in his actions, and whose rhetoric consisted in the plain dictates of honesty; you who have no less a tongue to adorn, than a hand to execute, may surely trust, at all times, to make the better reason triumphant, and propagate with all the captivating graces of eloquence, the inestimable lessons of public integrity.

It is fit for a great and powerful nation to lead in the example. In all the works of nature, the most stupendous have the simplest laws of motion. Crooked and narrow paths are made for smaller bodies. What has this mistress of nations to fear, in the just maintenance of her rights and dignity? The lion stoops not to imitate the fox. To the strong, manly courage and generosity are given; to the weak, dissimulation and artifice. Shall the powerful and magnanimous, abandon the weapons congenial to their condition, to assume those of the feeble and pusillanimous?

But if I have succeeded in proving this plan to

be practicable, I expect to find an objection of a more delicate nature in your own breast. You will think, perhaps, although you would be backward to express it, that I have expatiated in the praise of principles, which you have pursued; and have recommended a system, which has been in some degree your own. What faith have you violated? what dissimulation have you practised? what guilt of treachery can be ascribed to your character?—No, Sir; I do not mean to accuse you of such base opinions or conduct: it is because I believe in my conscience, that, taking all circumstances, you have, upon the whole, approached nearer to the practice of public honesty, than perhaps any one of your predecessors, that I am desirous of enforcing the necessity, and the advantage of an entire observance of its dictates in every transaction. But whatever may have been the principles by which you have been guided, it is too true, that you have been on some occasions less solicitous to explain them, than is consistent with sound policy.—*Esse quam videri bonus*, is, indeed, a noble and fundamental maxim of morality, and God forbid that we should exalt the semblance, so as to forget the substance. But usefulness is the true measure of public virtue; and

with this criterion, it follows, that it is no less your duty to study to appear honest, than really to be so.

But by this disclosure of the principle of your negotiations, I may be accused of endeavouring to narrow the prerogative of the Crown. Irresistible influence with foreign countries, I hold to be the best prerogative, and such you would bestow by this mode of negotiation. What is the object for which the management of treaties is lodged with the executive government? to ensure dispatch, secrecy, and consistency, in a greater degree, than can be expected from a numerous deliberative assembly. All this belongs to the detail rather than to the principle. Satisfied with the system of your foreign policy, we shall have no pretence or inclination to meddle, or to disturb the functions intrusted by the constitution to the administration; but doubtful, or discontented, we shall too surely be tempted to interfere, to impede, and too often to frustrate your most important operations.

If power and relative importance in the scale of Europe be the just object of ambition for states and their sovereigns, what condition can present so sublime an instance of accumulated strength,

as the energy of a rich and enterprising people, seconding, by an unanimous impulse, the just demands of their king? Money is the sinew of war: the vast exertions of modern empires in their mutual contests, so far surpassing the efforts of our ancestors, have no other foundation than the more extensive influence of industry and accumulating capital. Can the treasure of a despot, or the requisitions wrung by violence from the reluctant and trembling subject, outlast or preponderate over the momentum of an English monarch, supported by a free, commercial, and consenting people? the same liberty, which is the source of riches, by exciting diligence, ensuring property, and increasing comfort, has a direct tendency to give the spirit to use those riches, with an unreserved generosity, for noble and just purposes. The health, which constitutes the vigour of our bodies, and adds to our strength by a daily growth and renovation, has a similar effect to exalt our courage, to fortify our resolution, to multiply the force, and to maintain the perseverance of our efforts. It is this which enabled us to circumscribe, and, at length, to subdue the ambition of France, under the shape of a despotic monarch, and it is the same cause which will, after a hard and obstinate struggle, ensure us

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But by this disclosure of the principle of your negotiations, I may be accused of endeavouring to narrow the prerogative of the Crown. Irresistible influence with foreign countries, I hold to be the best prerogative, and such you would bestow by this mode of negotiation. What is the object for which the management of treaties is lodged with the executive government? to ensure dispatch, secrecy, and consistency, in a greater degree, than can be expected from a numerous deliberative assembly. All this belongs to the detail rather than to the principle. Satisfied with the system of your foreign policy, we shall have no pretence or inclination to meddle, or to disturb the functions intrusted by the constitution to the administration; but doubtful, or discontented, we shall too surely be tempted to interfere, to impede, and too often to frustrate your most important operations.

If power and relative importance in the scale of Europe be the just object of ambition for states and their sovereigns, what condition can present so sublime an instance of accumulated strength,

as the energy of a rich and enterprising people, seconding, by an unanimous impulse, the just demands of their king? Money is the sinew of war: the vast exertions of modern empires in their mutual contests, so far surpassing the efforts of our ancestors, have no other foundation than the more extensive influence of industry and accumulating capital. Can the treasure of a despot, or the requisitions wrung by violence from the reluctant and trembling subject, outlast or preponderate over the momentum of an English monarch, supported by a free, commercial, and consenting people? the same liberty, which is the source of riches, by exciting diligence, ensuring property, and increasing comfort, has a direct tendency to give the spirit to use those riches, with an unreserved generosity, for noble and just purposes. The health, which constitutes the vigour of our bodies, and adds to our strength by a daily growth and renovation, has a similar effect to exalt our courage, to fortify our resolution, to multiply the force, and to maintain the perseverance of our efforts. It is this which enabled us to circumscribe, and, at length, to subdue the ambition of France, under the shape of a despotic monarch, and it is the same cause which will, after a hard and obstinate struggle, ensure us

a final victory over their no less ambitious anarchy of the Revolutionary government. Let me not, therefore, be accused of desiring to narrow the prerogative, when the direct purport of this system is to secure it, and to give double weight to its exertions.

I will not trouble you with farther observations on our foreign concerns, though numerous and weighty considerations still remain to be urged on the same subject.

DOMESTIC CONCERNS.

I come now, Sir, to our domestic concerns. And here so large a field presents itself, that I am at a loss to compress the ideas which crowd into my recollection.

I must, therefore, give them some arrangement, that I may restrict them. The first that strikes my mind, is to recall to your memory the origin of your power in this country; the circumstances which have since arisen to affect it; and the reflections, which may be drawn from these premises, to influence your future conduct.

By what steps did you arrive at power? Upon

this part of the subject I have no apprehension to offend your feelings. You were tided in by the nearly unanimous sentiment of a great nation, appealed to by the King, through a general election, to rescue the government from the ambitious invasion of an overbearing party. Your talents had, for some time, attracted general admiration; they were considered as a sort of public property, bequeathed to us by your illustrious father: manly independence, youthful disinterestedness, fire, spirit, energy, and eloquence, were the hereditary qualities of the second William Pitt. Every thing tended to throw a lustre around you. The premature ripening of your understanding, increased your power by the wonder which it excited. Your youth drew our affection, while the suspicion of inexperience was done away, by the belief of the imparted observations, and transfused reasonings of your education. Your grave deportment, your steady logic, your wide and comprehensive intuition, your calm, open, and fair argumentation, your strict, regular, clear, and convincing inductions, gave the stamp of sincerity and deliberation to your speeches: and while the hearers listened with an approbation as complete as their astonishment, they felt something like the presence of a

preternatural agency, a metempsychosis of an instructed and experienced mind into a youthful body. They imputed to you the reserve of age, with the fire and vigour of early years: they were animated by the tenderness of attachment excited by the one, and the veneration and confidence deserved by the other. They looked forward to a long tenure of such advantages, by the vigour of your constitution, and anticipated, with a pleasing expectation, the vast accumulation of ability which continued practice should give to such a capacity. Unconnected with party, supported by multitudes unacquainted with your person, you excited no jealousy in the monarch or the people. The King felt that he had chosen wisely and fortunately, that no combination hemmed in and constrained his election; the people, both collectively and individually, ascribed your advancement to their testimony and exertions; you were called, and you were considered a heaven-born Minister.

The origin of your power, therefore, was public opinion. Upon this broad basis you stood as upon a commanding eminence, to defy all the ineffectual efforts of your adversaries. The opposition raised against you by disappointed ambition, had only the effect to magnify your influence by

a comparison ; and while you opposed temperate reason to heated declamation, the root of your strength spread deep and wide ; you governed by the affections, and for the benefit of your country.

What a noble, what a sublime situation ! ambition, commonly represented as a selfish principle, had here so changed its nature, that even to conceive in the imagination such a condition, exalts the opinion of human society. For once a statesman was so circumstanced, as to find corruption as impolitic, as it was unnecessary. You had it in your power to meliorate the state of our morals, and to make public integrity as acknowledged a principle of action, as private honesty. Personal attachment weighed little with numbers who supported you ; they were hand and heart in your assistance, from motives far above the imputation of venality, upon the constitutional ground of public confidence.

With such an opportunity, you were able to extend the national advantage, to promote the comfort, to enlarge the happiness of your country beyond example. If any man pretends to doubt this truth, let him venture to compare the prosperity of the kingdom, in the last peace, with its most favoured æra. Commerce flourishing and secure ;

manufactures multiplied, agriculture increasing, inland communication spreading on all sides; distant navigation facilitated; the public accounts simplified and ascertained; the revenues abundant; the mystery of finance explained and rendered familiar to ordinary conceptions—where shall I stop? how shall I enumerate the various blessings, which were continually springing from the vigour of a nation like Great Britain, under a stable and popular government? it is unnecessary to dilate upon what is so fresh in the recollection of us all.

If it were possible, during this period, for any persons to point out instances, in their opinion, of a less strict adherence to the plan of an uncorrupt reliance on public opinion, than was consistent with your ordinary system—To say, this job was permitted to such an adherent; that place was bestowed unworthily; this instrument of influence was used to ensure future dependents;—if you could not refute these accusations, as I should hope you might, in most of the imputed cases, I should say, the proof, or even the suspicion of such practices, had a direct tendency to diminish your power, to the accomplishment of which strict and undoubted integrity, could alone give the complete perfection: but I should boldly challenge

the world to show a period of history, in which the complicated affairs of so rich and so powerful a nation, had for an equal length of time been carried on, not only with the reality, but even the general belief, of so much public honesty.

Your adversaries complained of what they styled, a slavish confidence in the country. It was not wonderful, that they complained of what must have been to them a source of great mortification; but their complaints made little impression against a thorough conviction of their futility.

With this favourable acceptation of your conduct in the minds of your fellow-countrymen, and with a fortunate issue to almost all your undertakings, it was no wonder, that you thought it sufficient to let your actions speak for themselves; and by a sort of magnanimity, as natural as it was safe, you were little studious of explanations, when there were no doubts; and sought not to circulate the detail of arguments, which fell into ears inclined in all quarters to an unanimous acquiescence. This negligence of the arts of publication grew into a habit, and it was not extraordinary, the attention to make use of the press should appear to you of little consequence, from the small advantage derived by your adversaries, from their

unceasing activity; men who spared neither the talents of wit, nor the arts of argument and misrepresentation, to decorate their opinions.

One great evil arising from this state of things, and which constitutes a charge against you, that in my conscience I cannot deny, was a neglect of a set of men, whose help you did not require. Men of letters are sought by parties, who are on the lower ground, or where the contest is, in some degree, equal. Where there is little dispute or difference of opinion, ingenuity has but a bad market; and the most elegant or captivating writer, is a drug without a purchaser. Your adversaries during your now long extended administration, from a greater want of the assistance of pamphleteers and political authors, became the only patrons of literature, and of late have derived considerable advantage from being connected and in league with almost every man of letters, in indigent or in comfortable circumstances. The poorer sort were much assisted by the fortunes of the more opulent of your opponents, and those in a more easy condition, were captivated by free social intercourse, and the conviviality which the leisure of the opposition, as well as their political views induced them to exercise towards ingenious persons.

It is but too true, that the greatest reproach which will attach to your administration with posterity, is the little encouragement that has been held forth to literature, whether elegant or scientific. The Muses have been left to the patronage of Messrs. Cadell, and the public market; and although this species of encouragement has been in many instances productive, yet it will surely be allowed that there is a high duty incumbent on Government to attend to this department of political supervision. To nourish the taste, to enlarge the sphere of knowledge, to adorn, as well as to enrich your country, is not only the province of a minister, but a part of your functions, attended with as strict a responsibility as any other. It is indeed a responsibility of a singular nature, in which negligence is attended by certain punishment. Posterity will call you to account—No, rather, Sir, posterity will make little account of you, if you neglect those who are to be your historians.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona

Multi: sed omnes illachrymabiles

Urgentur, ignotique longa

Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

Too surely will punishment follow upon negligence, and the bright examples of politics will be

of little use but to the contemporary spectators.
 The infirmity of noble minds, if not their virtue
 or their sense of duty, should lead them to ensure
 an elegant record, as well as to furnish actions de-
 serving to be recorded.—

*Non quia Mæcenâs, Lydorum quisquis Etruscos
 Incoluit fines, nemo generosior est te—*Æc. Æc.

Harley, the nation's great support—Æc. Æc.

These are instances of everlasting fame, per-
 haps but ill bestowed, though indelibly written.
 The silken courtier of Augustus, and the supple ne-
 gotiator between St. Germain's and London, will
 be remembered, when abler and better men may
 be forgotten. We lisp their praises at school, and
 the sober inquiries of our riper years are not suf-
 ficient to eradicate the prejudice.

No, Sir, for your country's sake, if not for your
 own, let literature and science be your care; let
 the learned and the ingenious man experience
 your protection.—

He can reward thee, for he knows the charms,
 That can draw fame upon such acts as these;
 And he can lift thy name o'er lands and seas,
 Whatever clime the sun's bright influence
 warms.

The liberty of the press, that instrument of immeasurable force, without the unrestrained use of which freedom can no where long subsist, but with the unbalanced licence of which, all rational systems of government, of sober order, or of salutary restraint, can with difficulty continue, admits of no remedy but from itself. Its action and reaction must be equalized: foul misrepresentation must be met by fair explanation; good principles must be made to grapple with bad; eloquence must enter the lists as champion for the truth, to drive away sophistry, the abettor of falsehood.

But if this attention to counteract, by its own antidote, the evil arising from the licence of the press, was necessary, even during the existence of peace, or during the prevalence of ordinary opinions, how much have circumstances of late enforced that opinion! It is not, now imprudent only, it is unsafe to omit to enlighten the public mind by every method within your reach.

Sedition has of late arisen to affect the stability of your power, and no less the security of the happiness of every individual of the nation, as founded on the well poised system of temperate government. The popular branch of the legislature is

made the object of open attack, as well as the regal office. Corruption, venality, and profusion are represented as pervading the whole. It is attempted to blast the characters, not of this or of that leader of a party, but of all public men; and to represent politics as a game, in which individuals gain, and the people lose. Every art of misrepresentation is practised. Should you bring forward a measure, upon which the public mind may hesitate; should the introduction be sudden, the preliminary explanation defective, the satisfaction incomplete, the doubts of the House of Commons may yet be reasonably removed by a farther detail of the necessity of the case, and of the expediency and safety of the provisions, enforced by your eloquence, and proved by your argumentation. But if the explanation be suffered to stop there; if no farther industry be used to circulate the reasons that have operated to their persuasion, how large a field is open to the misrepresentations of those enemies of all social order, who would unloose the bands of the Constitution! Parliament, say they, is convinced: but not by argument: it is by other less constitutional means. Where are the reasons? what are the arguments? have you heard them? have you seen them? Bribery and

corruption are imputed, and the friends of the Constitution are at a loss for the answer. Publish but a careful report of the same reasons, which you know so well how to develop, and the fate of the battle is turned; the art of the attack is equalled by the skill of the defence; and the better reason will be every where as triumphant, as in your own presence.

The infection of these deleterious Jacobin principles invaded us in the fulness of national prosperity. We had, indeed, the hope, that having once before experienced the disorder, and brought it to a mature crisis in the last century, we should be exempt from the return of such a pestilence. We had passed through the fevers of despotism, anarchy, and usurpation, to arrive at our present happy temperament: it was, therefore, to be expected, that the recollection of such evils, and the actual enjoyment of such blessings, would sufficiently warn us to avoid all excesses which might endanger a relapse. Many persons, however, were alarmed at the pampered and plethoric state of the public body; and mindful of the known maxim, that the highest plight is in the greatest danger of a violent reverse, they felt their apprehensions rise, in proportion to the contrast, between what

we had to lose, and what we might expect to suffer. They dreaded to pass from the peaceful enjoyment of the utmost recorded accumulation of national happiness, to the struggles, the agonies, and the murders of civil tumult.

With such fears for the public safety, it is no wonder that party prejudices should give way, and that honest men of sound judgment should rally round the ancient banners of the Constitution, to repel this last and worst engine of French enmity. It is equally natural, that you should be ready to share the dignity and the authority of office with persons who gave such satisfactory proofs of their solicitude for the public welfare. There were many thinking minds, indeed, who would have wished that the support of these newly converted adherents to your administration had continued to be given from situations, in which even the suspicion of self-interest would have been impossible. The public confidence might perhaps, to a still greater degree, have followed their exertions in private, though exalted situations; where no emolument could have been imputed to them as a sort of price for their patriotism, and as an argument to weaken, though not to invalidate their testimony. To be admitted into power, and

to be cold to the solicitations of old friends, or forgetful of the services of faithful adherents, is a species of ingratitude which the connections of the world will not readily excuse. Those arrangements are therefore, perhaps, with difficulty to be avoided, but by remaining out of office.

But whatever may be the force of these observations (which have a natural connection with my subject, namely, the economy and most advantageous management of the treasure of public opinion) I shall leave them ; and prepare to take my leave of you, Sir, with a solemn adjuration to you, to give some consideration to the remarks I have thought it my duty, after much reflection, to submit to you in this shape.

I believe that you will give an easy assent to my first proposition ; that strict public honesty is the best means to obtain public confidence ; and that confidence was the original foundation of your power, and will ever be its most effectual support. But above all, I am anxious to impress you with the opinion of the necessity, and the advantage to the public welfare, and to the increase of your own means of utility to your country, of clear, full, and open explanations of your measures circulated by every means, and in all quarters.

Let not any person make you believe that these observations are tinged with party spirit, or embittered by private disappointment, or personal disaffection. No, Sir, upon the faith of an honest man, and of a true lover of his country, they are the genuine effusions of good will to yourself, as well as of ardent desire for the public welfare. It is much more for the good of my country than for your own, that I conclude with a very sincere prayer for a long and successful continuance of your administration; to the stability of which, in my conscience, I believe nothing will more effectually contribute than an attention to those particulars of conduct, which I have ventured to mention as in some degree deficient in your past administration. At all events, it can be no detriment to you to hear the undisguised sentiments of an independent man, and

A NEAR OBSERVER.

